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Freddy Krueger Melt Down

As seen in *A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge*

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A Nightmare
ON ELM STREET

Freddy Knueper
Melt Down

The clawed killer's blistered
and agonising demise.

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The Source Collection is published fortnightly as the number 1 issue of *SL* journal.

REPORT 2003-04 1000000

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© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 105–112

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80202-3209

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Movie moment

FREDDY KRUEGER

MELT DOWN

Reason in a desperate bid to escape his tormented past



Freddy Krueger has taken possession of Jesse Walsh and is using him to kill in the real world. But Jesse's girlfriend, Lisa, has different ideas... In a battle of wills at the climax of *Freddy's Revenge*, we witness a momentous and hideous occasion, as the evil slasher goes into melt down!

BEAUTY BEATS THE BEAST

Having wreaked havoc at Lisa's pool party, Freddy disappears. The courageous Lisa goes in search of her boyfriend who's trapped inside Krueger's body...



- ▶ Lisa finds the power plant guarded by two hideous dogs. This is director Jack Sholder's reference to Greek mythology (see page 5) — the dogs are evocative of mythological Cerberus, guardian of Hell.



- ▶ As Lisa enters, the camera pans out to reveal a labyrinthine inferno that is vast compared to her tiny figure — an accurate reflection of how she feels powered by the task ahead.



- ▶ What seemed like a tiny wound on Lisa's leg now starts to weep and crawl with a vile infestation. Because the wound was inflicted by Freddy, it's an unmistakable clue that she is getting closer to him.



- ▶ Inside the boiler room, the camera angles become more and more disorienting, creating a sense of unease in the viewer, which is only compounded by the accompanying glistening noises.



- ▶ The suspense is punctuated by a shock moment when a derelict cat and cat appear from nowhere — a sure sign that reality is slipping away and the surreal world of Freddy is approaching.



- ▶ Finally Freddy appears. As Lisa backs away, the camera takes the place of Freddy, moving towards her and boxing her in, allowing us to share Lisa's sense of oppression and claustrophobia.



- ▶ The turning point comes as Lisa appeals to Jesse, trapped within Krueger's body. The visual emphasis is on Lisa — not on Freddy shrinking from her.



- ▶ Lisa encourages Jesse to fight back, a scene that culminates in a bizarre and disgusting "beauty and the beast" moment, when she kisses Freddy.



- ▶ The kiss is enough to end it all for Freddy. As the entire boiler room bursts into flames, the symbolism is glaring — Freddy is going straight back to hell.



As the boiler room bursts into a blinding inferno, the demon with the knives is slumped helplessly in a corner – the kiss is too much for the man to whom such tender intimacy is alien and repulsive. And more importantly it is enough to give Jesse the strength to fight back.

The scene is a momentous one, calculatingly reminiscent of the time he first got those scars. In utter agony, Freddy starts to blister and melt, the skin sliding off his skull in a deliciously gory special effect. The death of the anti-hero is always significant, but never before and never again will Krueger go out quite like this.

“You are gonna go straight back to Hell!”

Lisa Webber

This symbol indicates a close-up feature on the following pages



The Bizarre beast has the body of a rottweiler and the face of a mutant baby

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

The boiler room appears repeatedly throughout the *Nightmare* series, usually as the place where unsuspecting teenagers end up in their dreams. During the climax of *Freddy's Revenge*, the boiler room that Lisa ventures into is supposedly real—the place where Freddy Krueger worked when he was alive—and not just a nightmarish vision. But as she gets deeper and deeper into this *Hades* maze, things become more and more surreal. This is, of course, the same otherworldly Hell that both Nancy and Tina visit in the first film. And *Freddy's Revenge* director Jack Sholder wanted to make sure that the audience realized this. He deliberately borrows aspects of the first film in order to evoke the same

atmosphere and feelings of those early Elm Street nightmares...

— Where *Nightmare* creator Wes Craven has a lamb streak across the corridor, Sholder has even more surreal beasts appear in the sequel. In the first film, Nancy burns her arm on a pipe in the boiler room and Lisa does the exact same thing in this movie moment sequence. And both films have high-pitched noises and echoing breaths accompanying the action. But most evocative of all (and reminiscent of our first encounter with Freddy), is that teeth-jarring sound and the sight of those razor-sharp claws being scraped along metal pipes—a spine-chilling sign that the scarred demon is getting ever nearer.

ALAN JONES the expert opinion

"I'm melting," screams the Wicked Witch of the West at the end of the classic fantasy *The Wizard of Oz*. The similar vanquishing of evil in *Freddy's Revenge* is the prime reason why actor Robert Englund has always liked his fearsome screen character to that fairy-tale staple. For as much as the Elm Street movies are pure horror stories, they still adhere to basic folklore themes.

Lisa is the fearless heroine desperate to save her Prince Charming (Jesse) from the force of malevolence Freddy represents. His roots in ancient culture are

further emphasized by the "Familiar" at his side. Usually in the form of a black cat, Freddy's attendant spirit is a boisterous amalgam of a rottweiler dog and a mutant baby. It's the terrifying tip-off, as Lisa enters the power plant, that here is one man an dream demon.

This Movie Moment occurs just after Lisa resorts to kissing Freddy to reawaken the dormant passion of the sleeping, i.e., possessed, Jesse. Passion rekindled and Freddy begins to lose control, being consumed by flames and exorcised in the ultimate act of purification by fire. As his

flask melts and his eyeballs pop in the heat, Freddy is rendered to nothing... Ashes to ashes, dust to dust—if God won't have him, the Devil must.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



"I wanted to cut back on the scar tissue and add more bone"

Special Effects Expert, Kevin Yagher

FILM FACT

Jacques Haitkin, director of photography from the first *Nightmare*, also worked on the sequel. Because the negatives for the first film had been damaged during processing, Haitkin was much happier with his work on the sequel, in which he went for a "more naturalistic zone."

Freddy's the same old psycho slasher as in the first film, right? Well almost. Look closely and you might notice there's something different about him.

Dan Milie, the man who created Freddy's original make-up, was unable to work on the sequel and so was replaced by special effects expert Kevin Yagher. Although Yagher admits that he would have designed Freddy differently had he been involved in the original character conception, he was obliged to keep Freddy's make-up the same to maintain consistency. However he didn't have much to work with... there were no photographs or materials from the first film. As he explains, "New Line Cinema did not know what they had when they made

Nightmare One. I did have three poor quality pictures showing the make-up going on; but watching the movie was more helpful." As a consequence, Freddy's make-up is not exactly the same.

In addition, Yagher felt that Freddy's face in the first film was a mass of scar tissue. "I wanted to cut back on the scar tissue and add more bone." Other subtle changes were brought in, such as the fact that Freddy wears contact lenses in the sequel to give his eyes a more demonic look. His ungloved hand is also burnt and scarred this time around. And the sleeves of his sweater are striped, while before they were plain.

A LABOUR OF LOVE



The climax of *Freddy's Revenge* sees a moment of tenderness that rarely occurs in horror movies - Lisa tries to save her boyfriend by kissing Krueger. While some may feel this sort of love-dovey nonsense has no place in a horror film, director Jack Sholder felt differently. "On another level, I see the picture as a love story. It's 'Beauty and the beast' after the hero turns into Freddy. His girlfriend has to win him back, and she does it through the power of love," he explains. For him, imparting human values through real characters was more important than the gory special effects. "The hardest thing was to not make it a special effects picture, to try to keep the human element in there," Sholder says.

FREDDY'S DEAD

Krueger may have been cooked this time, but you just can't keep a good serial killer down...

When we first meet Freddy Krueger he's actually already dead—having been buried alive by a Holstov cockle wielding molotov parents, incensed that he has escaped justice for his killing spree on a legal technicality. But then the claw-fingered mass murderer returns, this time to stalk the dreams of the children of Elm Street, bullhushing them in their sleep. It is, of course, somewhat problematic to kill someone who's already dead, but that hasn't

stopped many intrepid souls from trying. In fact, Freddy's been killed "numerous times" since he resurfaced on Elm Street.

Among those who've tried, and largely failed, to kill Freddy (once and for all) you'll find the likes of Nancy Thompson, Lisa Webber, Kristen Parker and Alice Johnson. All give it their best shot and enjoy at least a brief moment of triumph, in

which the ubiquitous Freddy appears to shuffle off the (im)mortal coil. But (and there's always a "but" in Freddy's case) such victories prove to be meaningless.

Round one

First into the ring against killer Krueger is Nancy Thompson in the first *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Nancy works wholeheartedly on the principle that by taking away the fear that seems to provide Freddy with sustenance, he will simply wither away and die. And so he appears to do

HOUNDS OF HELL

During the conclusion to *Freddy's Revenge*, Lisa's way into the power plant is barred by two slaverly unearthly hounds—with rotting, fleshy bodies and mutant baby heads. The beasts conjure up associations with Cerberus, the three-headed guardian of Hades (Hell) from Greek mythology, who insured that the dead could not leave and the living could not enter. The hounds are just one of the many horrors awaiting Lisa in the power plant. Though the suggestion is that these are all just waking nightmares, an extension of Freddy's power in the real world. However, it's established later in the series that Freddy's powers stem from these dream demons who—at the point of his fiery death—entered into an infernal pact with him. The inclusion of demonic imagery in *Nightmare 2* clearly shows that development of the character of Freddy was already well underway at this early stage. As producer Robert Shaye has gone on record as saying, during the course of development, "it was clear that Freddy Krueger was as important an element as the whole dream idea."





feeding out is mid-attack its Nancy boldly turns her back on him. But, no sooner has she wandered out of the front door, than her dde turns into a Freddy-rebelle and her mother is seized by Freddy himself and pulled screaming back into the house. 1-0 Freddy

A new heroine

Nancy is evidently in need of some R&R, so for the second film Freddy's Revenge rich kid Lisa Webber fills in. She kills Freddy by... kissing him. Yep, one smoocher and a rather hysterical "I love you!" and Freddy bursts into flames and melts. Though his ardour is evidently cooled, he shortly afterwards pops his claws out the chest of Lisa's friend on the school bus! Nancy is back for more in Dream Warriors, but ends up falling for Freddy's trick (he disguises himself as her father) and gets skewered. Young "dream warrior" Kristen Parker steps up and gives Freddy first hand experience of his own claws, while fellow-warrior Neil Gordon sacrifices Freddy's mortal remains, causing dream Freddy to copse. But an unearthly light in the area

of a scale model of 1428 Elm Street suggests Freddy Is just resting, not dead!

Still not gone

Alice Johnson provides the requisite showdown for The Dream Master. Following the words of a children's rhyme, she lets Freddy have a look at his reflection, causing him to start disgorgeing the souls of his victims at an alarming rate, until finally his head explodes. But, at the end of the film, Freddy's (distinctly intact) visage is glimpsed in a fountain!

Freddy's penchant for improvisational resurrections is never more apparent than in The Dream Child, in which he tries to get himself born, inhabiting the dreams of Alice's son-to-be. Thankfully, Freddy's mother returns to put Freddy back in her womb.

"I'm not dead!"

Freddy Krueger in A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: The Dream Master

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

The (often published) association with Hell don't end with the instant guardian dogs we saw in Freddy's Revenge. For starters, Freddy's real life death is suitably infernal, burnt alive by the vengeful parents of Elm Street, and since then several of the films have featured pyrotechnics. In the first A Nightmare on Elm Street, Nancy Thompson sets Freddy alight in her basement, and in 2, Freddy disappears from the pool party in a burst of unearthly flame. Just to emphasize the point in his self-referential Wes Craven's New Nightmare (the seventh film in the series), director Craven has Freddy metamorphose into the Devil himself!

Presumably now "born again", Freddy is back and up to his old tricks in Freddy's Dead. Having renewed old family ties in the last film, Freddy decides to look up his daughter, Kathryn, who's (wisely) calling herself Dr Maggie Burroughs these days. She responds to his fatherly overtures by dragging him into the real world, stabbing him with his own claws, blowing him up with a pipe bomb and sending him to Hell.

So Freddy's dead, right? Wrong. Hell's a mere inconvenience to the indestructible Freddy. There's always a New Nightmare just round the corner.

On set

MELTING POINT

When Freddy Krueger goes into melt down in the final scenes of *Freddy's Revenge*, it's a spectacular horror moment – and one that involved equally spectacular special effects. Discover just how the special effects team cooked Krueger...

The person responsible for Freddy's look in *A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge* was a young (just 23 years old at the time) special effects man named Kevin Yagher. Having

previously worked as part of a team on various films (including *Friday The 13th: The Final Chapter*), this was Yagher's first time in charge. His work on the dazed killer is undeniably outstanding throughout *Freddy's Revenge*, but the highlight has got to be the astounding melt-down scene.

Most staggering of all was the fact that melting Freddy was not actually actor Robert Englund in a lot of gooey make-up, but rather a mechanical, incredibly life-like Freddy sculpture! "Many people," told me they didn't know it was a fake," exclaims Yagher. In order to achieve the effect, Yagher built several mechanical

structures. The first was the skeletal understructure, which included skull, eyes and teeth. Then on top of this he used hot-pour wax to create the fake skin. Finally holes were cut exposing one of his cheeks and some of his skull, which were painted with fake blood. Ready for action...

Moving parts

The reason the sculpture looked so realistic was because it was mechanical: the eyes could blink and the eyebrows went up and down, the mouth searled, the tongue could move and the jaw would open and shut. Even the eyes could fall out!



A close-up of the amazing moving Freddy skull sculpture, complete with goring hole lenses. The mechanical Freddy sculpture is put in place ready for melt-down (left). And actor Robert Englund plays a terrified Freddy prior to his gory demise (above left).



Such complicated effects require, of course, a lot of manpower to execute. As well as his whole special effects team, Yagher enlisted the help of several stagehands to work the Freddy "puppet". "Crew members pulled cables and pumped blood. One of the producers was even pumping ooze. We had everybody working," remembers Yagher. Each part of the sculpture moved separately and Yagher himself worked the head and jaw.

Although the demise of Freddy is a fantastic on-screen moment, the audience is actually unable to see all of Yagher's work in its complete gory glory because the footage of melting Freddy was cut at editing stage.

"ONE OF THE PRODUCERS WAS EVEN PUMPING :OOZE!"

Kevin Yagher, Special Effects Expert

Director Jack Sholder decided to focus more on the confrontation between Lisa and Freddy than the special effects, switching between Lisa, the flaming boiler room and Freddy in and out. Yagher expresses his disappointment at this: "It's kind of upsetting that after all that work, none of it shows." Well it certainly wasn't all for nothing. It may be just a glimpse, but the image of the psycho slasher's hideous skin dripping and oozing off his tortured face is one that fans will never forget!

BABY FACE

To create the beasts that guard Freddy's Hell, puppet effects man Rick Lazzarini was asked to make two mutant baby masks, which would be fitted to two (real) dogs. Lazzarini and his assistant, Alec Ellis, had originally hoped to get life casts of the dogs, but when they turned up at the trainer's house, they soon realised it was wishful-thinking: "No way," relates Lazzarini. "They were huge rottweilers, who couldn't sit still for a second."

In the end Lazzarini and Ellis took measurements and photos of the dogs and built plaster replicas of their heads from which to work. Then they sculpted the mutant-baby faces out of oil-based Plastiline clay onto the "heads". From these sculptures they created moulds and it was these that were finally used to make the masks out of latex and polyfoam.

Truly disgusting

The masks were painted "to look truly fleshy and disgusting", as Lazzarini describes. They added hair to match the dogs' fur and finished the masks with glass eyes. In the mouth areas a dark screen was inserted, so that the dogs could look out, if they so wished. And last but not least, there were the spiked leather collars – not just vicious-looking accessories, but also a means of blending the edge of the mask with the real dog!

The crew were pleased with the final result. The dogs, however, were less so. "The dogs absolutely hated wearing them," tells Lazzarini. "They would keep their heads down or try to paw them off during the shot. So it's lucky we got anything usable on them."

Rick Lazzarini fits the mask, while Alec Ellis holds the dog still between. The grotesque mutant-baby mask, close-up (right).



THE NIGHTMARE NEVER ENDS

When Wes Craven came up with his unique idea for *A Nightmare on Elm Street* he never envisaged a sequel. But horror fans felt differently. Freddy had struck a major chord with audiences and neither they nor New Line Cinema were going to let the Nightmare end that easily...

Writer/director Wes Craven struck it lucky when his script for *A Nightmare on Elm Street* landed on the desk of Robert Shaye, the head of New Line Cinema. Up until that point the property had been doing the studio rounds for over three years without raising any interest. It was only when Craven took his screenplay into the independent

filmmaking sector, the place where gut instinct elicits

guaranteed a gamble, that Shaye put his complete faith in the project in order to raise New Line's profile. His company had produced a handful of movies before, but nothing with the ambition or cost of Craven's brainchild.

Clever foresight

Why was he attracted to a script about a dream demon? Shaye said at the time, "It wasn't a killer-on-the-loose film like we'd been constantly seeing. It was an archetypal movie monster in a dream who happens to have the ability to keep you from waking while he gets you. There was none of that slasher gore for gore's sake and it had some

unique fantasy-thriller moments. Those differences are what made it a success."

An absolutely massive success, in fact, despite the tightest \$2 million budget, which only allowed a 30-day shooting schedule when Craven wanted 36. And despite many of the crew having to work non-stop through the nights to fulfil their obligations, the finished film was well-received when released in November 1984. Typical of the glowing reviews was this from *The New York Times*: "Craven's movie drills for fresh nerves... the first murder is one of the most convulsive and (literally) stomach-

"It had some unique fantasy-thriller moments"

Producer, Robert Shaye

Movie producer Robert Shaye takes a glance at Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street*

chiming I've ever seen because there's an implicit contract between a horror film director and his audience that dreams don't kill... a minor masterpiece." But while the preps were waxing lyrical over Craven's wonderful direction and masterful horror imagery, audiences had a far more down to earth reason to appreciate the film. And his name was Freddy Krueger

The enchanting anti-hero

Although capable of the most horrifying acts, this dream demon was still someone the audience could identify with because Englund invested his enchanting anti-hero with shreds of humanity and an evil sense of humour. He was educated and erudite but also a nasty piece of work with a personality that could move from buffoon to butcher in a shocking instant. Englund described his precision monster characterisation as

"The Wicked Witch of the West for a new generation." Overnight, Freddy became a classic bogeyman, the physical manifestation of all our deepest fears, and one that would haunt the horror psyche forever.

The instant success of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* meant a sequel was definitely on the agenda. This possibility had already become a contentious issue between Craven and Shaye during production. "New Line put a lot of pressure on me to have an ending that would lend itself to a sequel," Craven said. "I didn't particularly want to do that. My film ended with Nancy turning her back on Freddy and telling him he was nothing, showing evil can be diminished. Nancy had become as tough as Freddy. It was carefully thought out and had to do with a world view of my own."

Twist ending

However, because Shaye had taken a chance on his creation when no one else had, Craven understood Shaye's business concerns and compromised. So the twist ending had Freddy claim Nancy's mother as his final victim while survivors drove off into the mist in a red and green striped car.

Almost immediately Craven found it impossible to escape the growing *Nightmare* cult that rears, and the fact that he had

financial problems (meaning he had sold his ownership rights to any future sequels anyway), he was reluctant to get involved

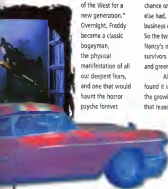
PUPPET MASTERS



Philadelphia born Jack Sholder helped New Line Cinema become the major entertainment force it is today. An accomplished editor and director since 1964, with a host of award-winning shorts and television work to his name, Sholder directed one of the fledgling production company's first movies. *Alone in the Dark* was released in 1982 and was a psycho shocker about four criminally insane murderers breaking out of their mental hospital. Based on his sterling work in that film, providing quality scores, he was hired to direct Freddy's *Revenge* only six weeks before shooting was scheduled to begin. He saw the first *Nightmare* sequel as his chance to broaden Freddy Krueger's mainstream appeal by adding more humour. In fact, he couldn't direct the pool house scene without collapsing with laughter and so his assistant director had to complete it.

It all worked out though because Freddy's *Revenge* was a massive hit. His reward was the job of helming New Line's 1987 hit *The Hidden*, a fast and furious blast of sci-fi splatter action about an alien parasite borrowing human bodies. Once again Sholder's understanding of horror and humour in a social context elevated his work and provided a neat kipper to his exemplary New Line genre billings.

Freddy Krueger (above left) — the wicked witch for a new generation! And the Freddy-mobile — the twist ending to the first *Nightmare* which paved the way for a sequel (left)



Inside story

when offered the chance to direct Part 2: *Freddy's Revenge*. Instead Shaye brought on board Jack Sholder who had directed the early New Line Cinema production *Alone in the Dark* and received a 'special thanks' credit for his support on the first *Nightmare* film.

Sholder knew he had to try and top the original and spread its appeal beyond the hard-core splatter fan to deliver the expected franchise builder. He considered more humour to be the vital key and decided to lighten up Craven's trademark oppressive darkness. Regarding the movie as more than sheer horror, Sholder decided to bring in more human elements, which can be seen in the relationship between Lisa and Jesse.

Together with screenplay writer David Chaskin – a long time New Line marketer and distribution expert for such films as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* – the duo brought Freddy Krueger out into the waking world. They also crafted scare scenes to catch the audience off guard – with a gag or one-liner that would provide comic relief for an instant, but then suddenly turn back on itself and therefore build the terror.

This aspect of the new \$3 million movie really excited Robert Englund. He saw the sly, perverse humour in the script as a virtue and his opportunity

to really make an impact above and beyond the fright factor. "These extra elements to the script I found really attractive," explained

Englund, who couldn't wait to get into make-up and costume again as the sardonic spectre possessing hero Jesse Walsh's body.

FILM FACT

While the first *Nightmare* instalment introduced Freddy Krueger as a virtually silent and serious killer, *Freddy's Revenge* gave the dream stalker much more of a voice. So much so, in fact, that *New York Times* critic Janet Maslin even alluded to him as "chatty".



The dream machine – Freddy's *Revenge* was the last of many more sequels to come

The dream machine

Nor could audiences wait to see the man of their worst dreams back in the cinema. *Freddy's Revenge* grossed over \$30 million at the box-office and ensured the nightmares would continue well into the 21st century. Sholder's sensational reworking of Craven's core concepts had done what few horror movies do – attract new audiences to the genre, who were intrigued by the Krueger marvel and who were starting to turn him into a pop icon away from the actual movies. From *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* onwards the franchise became its own dream machine developing imaginative fantasy deaths to enhance the menacing magical world inhabited by Freddy's incredibly warped deviousness.

Even though Freddy was declared dead in *The Final Nightmare*, the news of his 3-D demise was greatly exaggerated. For Craven then revived his chilling creation in the most radical way ever by mixing sophisticated filmmaking

fact with innovative *Elm Street* fiction in Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*, the director opened up the series for further interpretations, like the *Freddy vs. Jason* grudge match. It was the ever-evolving progression of the series into such unusual areas that kept it fresh and engaging and ensured its continuing success.

ON LOCATION: THE BOILER ROOM

With its dark, steaming corridors Krueger's boiler room lair is the dream setting for any nightmare – a complete and utter contrast to the suburban bliss of Elm Street. But this is more than just a creepy setting. It's the place where Freddy Krueger waited when employed by the local power plant and it's the cocoon setting he felt most at home in. No one disturbed him there and that's why he chose it as the spot to murder 20 neighbourhood children.

Burned alive

The boiler room also marked the place of his death, as revealed by Marge Thompson in the first film. For when Freddy escaped jail on a technicality, the parents of the children Freddy had killed took the law into their own hands, finding Krueger in his beloved boiler room and burning him alive.

In *Freddy's Dead* we discover that it then became the scene of his satanic pact. As flames roared behind him, Freddy's tormented spirit was approached by three demons, reaching the land of the living to find the most evil soul to give them the power to turn dreams into reality. And after accepting their offer, the boiler room became not only Freddy's refuge, but also his own hell where the victims of his dream manipulations would remain fixed in the fiery shadows forever.

All the boiler room scenes were shot at a run-down disused jail in Lincoln Heights, Los Angeles. Worryingly, parts of the jail have since been condemned because of being built with asbestos. When they found this out the crew of the first *Nightmare* were less than pleased: "I always thought that we'll all end up dying at the same time in like 20 years from now," says Craven. The rest of the building is, however, still used for movie locations, averaging 250 days of filming each year.



It was Craven's acclaimed director of photography, Jacques Haitkin, who lit the boiler room in keeping with the director's nuanced undertones. It had to be Freddy's playground and his hostile underworld. Haitkin ensured the reflective metals and dingy decoration glowed with burnished



red-hot tones to resemble the surreal Gothic art of such medieval Flemish master painters as Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel.

Craven wanted the boiler room to represent Freddy's heart of darkness, the point of no return for anyone daring to enter. Dante's *Inferno* and Freddy's infernal ground became one in Craven's grand design for the boiler room as the road to eternal punishment and nightmare damnation.

"We'll all end up

dying at the same time."

Wes Craven on filming in an asbestos-ridden building



Probably it looked like prison – the boiler room, as seen in *Freddy's Revenge* (above and above left). Inside Lincoln Heights Jail Cell, where the original boiler room scenes were shot.

How To DIE LAUGHING

Comedy and Horror? Isn't that like putting ice cream with tuna fish? When you're scared out of your wits, surely the last thing you want to do is laugh...? Well, yes you do actually, because feeling scared and laughing are both natural reactions to the outrageous.

Both comedy and horror are about worlds where the normal rules of behaviour do not apply. In horror anything can happen, which means that as well as being terrifying and repulsive it can also be ludicrous. Imagine trying to explain *A Nightmare on Elm Street* to

a person who has never seen a scary film? A cremated killer in a stoppy jumper with a bladed glove kills teenagers in their dreams. Sick? But isn't that idea also a bit funny?

not us. His desperate stoking fire order only makes it worse until finally we explode in gleeful mirth.

So how does this work in horror?

Horror can sometimes be too gruesome. There are few films that can sustain the really terrifying moments throughout an entire 90 minutes. This is why most films begin with a good scare and then have not much happen for the next half hour. If we did have a full 90 minutes of gore we would become desensitised, so we need a little light relief before the next white knuckle ride. This is where the comedy kicks in.

MUST BE A JOKE

"Oh my God I look 20 YEARS OLD!"

79 year old Heather Langenkamp in *Halloween* (1978)

"BUT'S THAT FOR A BIT BREAST?"

Frankly after slinking Jerry in his waterbed (1985/6)

"SOMETHING IS TRYING TO GET INSIDE OF ME."

"YEAH, IT'S FEMALE AND WAITING FOR YOU IN THE CABINA — AND DID WANT TO SLEEP WITH ME?"

Ron Goady and Jesse Walsh (1985/2)

"LOOK AWAY YOUR DUTTERIES EYES TO THE DOOR!
AIDN'T GOT NO PRIDE IN HIS BONES!"

"The Cuck" complaining about Unleashface using the chainsaw on the floor (1984/1984)

"PLANNING ON SMOKING A LITTLE DOPE,
EATING A LITTLE PHOTOCOPIAL SHIT AND
GETTING SLIGHTERED?"

Steven Prentiss to some Hitchhikers
(1986/1986)



Horror films rely on patterns. First there's the careful layering of questions set up in our minds to disorientate us. This is followed by dread, which then takes us to the brink of panic and finally explodes into sheer terror. We are revolted and repulsed but also momentarily released from our fears until the cycle begins again.

Comedy works on a similar principle. A novice or idiot stumbles into (or creates) a comic situation. He says or does the wrong thing, which makes the situation unstable. As the situation worsens, he tries to squeal, to shore up the embarrassment and (so stop) the whole thing from imploding. We giggle at the desperation and wince in relief that it is

Lightening the darkness

As long as we know it's safe, we all like to be at least a little bit scared. This starts way back in childhood. Remember when your Dad growled playfully "I'm coming to get you." You shrieked in glee as he lumbered forwards doing the Frankenstein walk with outstretched hands. Somehow you always let yourself be caught and then, once the Monster had captured his prey, he tickled you (a laughter response). This is a natural way of preparing for the real horrors of life. A dash of comedy makes the horror safe.

Comedy offers relief. We have been bound up in the film, identifying closely with the awful things on screen. We need

UNINTENTIONAL LAUGHS

Also, all too many horror films suffer from unintentional comedy. The clichéd/slice 'N' dice/serial killer film is the most... prone to this as it has been over-used as a subgenre over the years. If the horror monster is plainly a man in a diving suit with some feathers and a beak stuck on, we will laugh. If the dialogue is risible, the direction poor and the plot incomprehensible we will groan.

Horror, by its nature, requires little character development. These isn't true, because it's a ride, not an examination of the psyche. The more characters you have, the less fully rounded they are. They are

types rather than sympathetic beings. The geek, the jock, the sensible girl, the dumb yet loyal boyfriend, the prankster and the final girl are so common now that we need more. We know they will ignore warnings and travel to some isolated place. We know the phone will pick up and they will not leave at the first sign of trouble. We know they won't realise they are being killed off one by one until someone has said: "Let's split up and go check it out."

We groan at such clichés and ultimately we sometimes laugh at them. We know no one could be so dumb. The bar has been raised!



It becomes: A joke will diffuse the situation, give us a pause and make us think that everything is going to be alright. Laughter reduces stress and triggers the release of

endorphins, the body's natural painkillers, which produces a general sense of well-being. It's good for us.

Let's get together

Laughter is cohesive. A joke pulls us together. It might be a comedy death or a predictable pun that we groan at. But laughter takes us from our private hell into a shared domain. It keeps out the dark – for a while. Comedy is also a contrast to all the terrible things going on on screen. The horror film needs glimpses of light, and it's all the better for it, because the horror feels even worse the next time. We also laugh out of sheer cruelty. All comedy has its targets and in the slasher

movie, most of us laugh at the victims who are killed in 90. That has changed over the years. It hasn't really changed. But always remains, and once it has been done, this time, this is the last time we can, and if it's all, somebody's going to laugh actually cheer!

Taboo-busting

Comedy breaks society's taboos of how we ought to think and behave. Since horror does a similar thing with violence they are comfortable bedfellows. The horror or comedy film gives us permission to laugh at the things we shouldn't. It is meant to be inappropriate. If you have sat through *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* you will have been alternately horrified and amused as the horror just keeps on coming. If you have ever been to a funeral of someone that you are not very close to, you will know that the urge to laugh is immense. We laugh because we are not supposed to.

The comedy death

In pure horror you identify with every scrape, tear or stab. Once horror passes into a slapstick world where you don't feel for the characters, however, then we can enter the realm of the comedy death. These deaths usually happen to minor characters – the



It's laughs all round when the luckless lady, Janey, gets decapitated while saving her mother-in-law. *Friday The 13th Part IV: A New Beginning*

"MY FAMILY'S ALWAYS BEEN IN MEAT"

THE HITCHHIKER IN THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1974)

Fear factor

Death! It's a natural law, the terrifying force of nature. Now? It's a terrifying, often silly, or comically inept force of death. It "appears", glimmers on the horizon, or, make the death as gratuitous as it is as close as he likes.

The false scare

Many horror films are built on the false scare. It is all part of the road to the real death. These false scares build the audience

into passion. (Remember how scared is the phone no longer works, the victim is isolated. She must creep towards the source of the evil. Something is moving under an old tarpaulin. She reaches out and... it's a kitten. Relief. Laugh. She creeps round the corner and suddenly... there's her friend. But he's been slaughtered and behind him is the real killer!

We have seen this happen so often that we expect the false scare. This is used

particularly well in the *Friday* The 13th sequels. The trick of the modern filmmaker is to stage the false scare so well that we are fooled (and jump) all over again.

Comedy and horror are now so intertwined that we expect to laugh along with our screams. Would we enjoy a horror film quite as much if there were absolutely no comic relief? No, we'd probably want to slit our wrists... only kidding!

LAUGHING MATTERS

IRONY

Irony is a hidden meaning of which the characters are unaware. This means both the audience and filmmakers are in on the joke. Irony relies on familiarity with the text and is therefore often present in many sequels. As Liebeth in the sixth *Friday* film says: "I've seen enough horror movies to know any winds wearing a mask is never kindred."

CAMP

Originally popular in theatre, camp means to pose in an exaggerated fashion. Verbally it encompasses bad taste and an ironic attitude. Camp remarks are bitchy retorts or witty put-downs, meant to be offensive – an ideal partner for the horror movie. Think of any of the great horror monsters – aren't they all a little bit camp? With his exaggerated moves and witty put-downs Freddy Krueger is the prime example.

WITTY WISECRACKS

The snappy comeback or one-liner fits well into the world of the horror film, which is mostly populated by teens – unformed characters desperate to fit in or to be seen as cool. The easy way of doing this is to

use sarcasm, mimicry or just plain insults. The character of Glen Lantz in the first *Nightmare* film is left sleeping on the sofa alone, as the couple in the room above are getting on down. His comment as he hears the screams of passion? "Morality Sucks!"

SLAPSTICK

In comedy it's custard pies, in horror it's gore as the entrails are tossed around in an ocean of blood. It should be called splatter-stick. Pus. Gore. Slippery, slippery things going in and out of inappropriate orifices. There is something so refreshingly taboo-busting about our insides being on the outside that our reaction to it becomes a mixture of appalled horror and laughter.

ADDING INSULT TO INJURY

Sometimes, to cap the comedy-horror, you take the slapstick torture to ridiculous extremes. This is called adding insult to injury. We laugh when it just gets worse and worse. We know we shouldn't but we are in that giddy unreal world where pain is not a

factor. Perhaps one of the greatest examples of this comes in the original *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. After several brutal deaths, including a meat hook hanging and a wheelchair slaughter, poor luckless Sally remains the final victim. Leatherface and family decide to honour this event with a good ol' family meal. He's even painted his mask with make-up to look all "purdy". She screams her lungs out. They scream right back at her. Sarcastic, cruel and very funny.





HORROR GLOSSARY

The dictionary continues – dangerous locations, fated victims, special effects experts and much more...

BAILEY (TCM 2004)

One of the victims in the *Chainsaw* prequel. She has a meathook stabbed in her chest, and later her throat slit with a pair of scissors by Thomas Hewitt (the young Leatherface).

BARN


Barns see more than their fair share of murderous romps in the hay in the *Friday The 13th* series. Thanks to their (often)

secluded location, as well as the abundance of sharp weapons and dark corners, barns make the perfect location for stalk and slash killing sprees. In *Part 3* Chris Higgins fights a bitter battle with Jason in the barn, as do the surviving protagonists at the end of *A New Beginning* (Part 5).

BARR, ROSEANNE

See Tom Arnold.

BARRY (FYS:1)

The first character to be killed on screen in a *Friday The 13th* movie.




When Barry sneaks off to make out with his girlfriend, he gets loaded in the stomach by an unknown assailant. And this is before the opening credits have started rolling.

BARTHOLOMEW, CASE

Now famous special effects make-up man who worked on the seventh *Friday*, *Jason Lives*.

BATHROOMS

Never go to the bathroom on your own in a slasher movie! Countless calamities happen in the place where you're at your most vulnerable. Whether it be in the bath (Nancy, NOES 1), taking a shower (Doug, F13:4), simply looking in the mirror (Kristen, NOES 3) or even on the toilet (Demon, F13:5) the bogeyman will always catch up with you in the bathroom.

BAX, MICHAEL


The acclaimed producer of many recent box office hits, including *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* 2003 remake and the 2006 prequel, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre – The Beginning*.

"BEGINNING OF THE END"

Song performed by Spinebark on the *Freddy Vs. Jason* soundtrack.

BELL, WAYNE

The composer of the music and sound for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974).

BEN (FYS:7)

Ben has his head crushed by Jason's bare hands, making him the ninth victim in *The New Blood*.

BERGER, HOWARD

Oscar winning special make-up effects expert who worked on *Nightmares* 4 and 5, as well as *New Nightmare* and *Jason Goes to Hell*.

BERNSTEIN, CHARLES


The composer of the famously creepy signature tune to *A Nightmare on Elm Street*.

BILL, JESSICA

The actress who played the heroine Erin in the 2003 *Chainsaw* remake.

BILL (FYS:1)

The ninth victim in the first *Friday* film, Bill is pinned to the door with an axow through his eye. Interestingly, Bill was played by Bing Crosby's son, Harry.

BILLY (FYS:5)


As Billy waits for his girlfriend in the diner car park, he gets an ax to the back of the head, making him the Jason wannabe's third victim in *The New Beginning*.

CC We weren't doing anything, we were just messing arou...
33-

Barry before he gets killed in *Friday The 13th*

WITH ISSUE 5

Your first victim figurine from *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master*. Debbie – Insect Agony depicts the gruesome moment Krueger turns this Elm Street teen into a cockroach.

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